

Lewis & Clark County Sheriff's Office
221 Breckenridge • Helena, MT 59601-4230

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 2/10/11
HB 390 & 407-8452

Sheriff Leo C. Dutton

Undersheriff David M. Rau

Margie MacDonald and committee members:

My name is Will Kussman. I want you to know I am in full support of HB 390, the bill dealing with "Regulating Facilities that Breed Dogs for Sale Or Sell Dogs." I am a Sergeant for the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office and have on many occasions investigated complaints dealing with dogs sold from local breeders here in the Helena area.

One of the complaints dealt with an individual who identified themselves as a breeder of a rare breed of dog. The complaints consisted of the puppies getting sick within a 24 hour period after the new owner bringing the dog to their home. The new owner took the puppy to a local vet where it was diagnosed with "Parvo."

When I went to speak with the breeder, I was allowed to see the housing facility for the puppies and their mother. It was more of a warehouse than a place for care and comfort of the mother and her pups. The breeder had left dirty (soiled) laundry throughout the facility. There was a table where the breeder had done vaccinations. It was soiled with medications left open and tipped over. I also noted several of the kennels were over-crowded and unkept. There was dog feces in many of the kennels as well as soiled newspaper which was used to absorb the urine left by the puppies.

I told the breeder why I was there and further told the breeder the puppies they were selling may have "Parvo". The breeder denied the claim stating they ran a clean and very respectable business. My feeling was the breeder was more interested in the money aspect rather than the care and health of the puppies in question.

On another investigation the breeder was raising Cocker-Spaniels. The dogs were kept outside in a 10 X 10 chain link kennel. The breeder made no effort to clean up the feces or maintain clean water for the animals. At one point after several complaints about the care of the animals (dogs), I went out to see what the dogs were like. The dogs had been allowed to run free in the yard. They had torn an opening in the skirting of the trailer to get under the residence to keep warm. When I located the breeder, I was told they were unable to pay for the power to the residence and as such the water froze at the residence. The breeder chose to move from the residence leaving dogs to fend for themselves.

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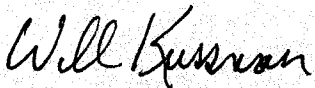
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The Cocker-Spaniel's coat had grown to such length that it resembled "Dred-Locks". Their nails were long and starting to curl. Due to the weight of the dried feces, mud and dirt in the coats, some of the dogs could hardly walk. Once they were removed from the area, the dogs smelled so bad, one could hardly be in the same room with the dogs.

Had there been a system in place where these breeders had to be inspected and licensed, I do not believe cases such as these would exist. I believe this bill is a good start in regulating breeders who do not care about the dogs they sell in Montana.

Sincerely,



Sergeant Will Kussman

Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office